

Sports

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Hosts in tough at Beaver Tournament



Winterhawks off to slow start at annual holiday hockey bash

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

The Beaver Tournament hosts were hoping the best was yet to come heading into yesterday afternoon's action.

Of the Winterhawk teams' eight games to that point, only one ended in victory.

Here's a look at how each hometown representative fared over the first day-and-a-half of competition.

Tykes

Donning their rally caps in early-morning play Monday, Milton's smallest hosts wiped out a 3-0 deficit with under six-and-a-half minutes remaining to tie Guelph's second-entry team.

Rylee Buckle scored back-to-back goals 1:13 apart to ignite the comeback and then helped set up Hollis MacKinnon's equalizer with 25 seconds to go.

Assisting on all three markers was Ricky Bicchierai, while Ian Engstrom picked up a single helper on goal number two.

There'd be no turning the tide in round two, however, as the host tykes fell behind early and were whitewashed 2-0 by Stoney Creek. The Winterhawks were penalty-free in both contests.

A Milton Winterhawks player gets taken into the boards by a Peterborough Nationals opponent during round two minor bantam play at the Beaver Tournament Monday evening. The Winterhawks lost 3-0.

Photo by BARRIE ERSKINE

Novices

A three-point performance by Rourke Ferguson served only to keep things respectable Monday morning, as the hometown novices played catch-up all game and were doubled up by Flamborough 6-3.

Three goals against in the final frame put things away.

Ferguson figured in goals by Brett Melanson and Ben Preisner before scoring himself inside the last three minutes of play. Drawing one assist apiece were Marcus Kotyk and Adam Wilson.

A couple of late penalties hurt Milton's comeback efforts, while Flamborough stayed out of the penalty box the entire game and got scoring from five different players.

Melanson would give the novices new life the next morning — scoring three goals, including two in the third, to pull out a 3-3 tie with Ancaster.

Two of his tallies were set up by Aidan Atkinson, while single helpers went to Ferguson, Kotyk and Wilson.

Minor atoms

The minor atom Winterhawks' scoring touch resurfaced just before Christmas, but quickly disappeared again in round one against Mississauga Monday evening.

Unable to get anything going offensively, they fell behind early and were blanked 5-0. Their big-city opponents sealed the deal with three third-period deposits and took just one minor penalty down the stretch to limit Milton's chances for a turnaround.

Minor bantams

Keeping his team's championship hopes alive through round one, Alex Kang erased two one-goal deficits in Milton's 2-2 stalemate with Georgetown Monday morning.

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